

Timber Creek Timber Sale

June 18, 2007 Land Board

Location of Sale:

- Missoula Unit (SWLO) – Approximately 3 Miles Northwest of Haugan, MT.
- Mineral County – Section 16, T19N, R30W.
- 100% Common School Trust.
- This proposed sale is located within the wildland/urban interface.

Sale Volume & Estimated Value:

- The estimated volume is 9,209 tons (1,520 MBF) with an estimated minimum value of \$207,226.00 or \$22.50/ton.
- In addition to the stumpage value, a fee of \$2.68/ton for Forest Improvement will be charged for all merchantable sawlog timber harvested.
- 6.06 tons/MBF is the conversion factor.

Sale & Harvest Treatments:

- The sale consists of 6 harvest units totaling 243 acres.
- Silvicultural prescriptions include 188 acres of selection harvest, 32 acres of overstory removal, and 23 acres of commercial thinning. The selection harvest would remove dead, dying and at risk lodgepole pine while retaining all western larch, Douglas-fir and western white pine. The overstory removal prescription would remove dead, infected and threatened lodgepole pine. A healthy understory comprised of lodgepole pine, western larch, and western white pine is present and would be retained in the overstory removal stands. The commercial thinning treatment would reduce competition on 23 acres and would retain healthy, vigorous dominant and co-dominant Douglas-fir and Ponderosa pine.
- No old growth stands would be harvested.

Harvest System:

- 90% tractor
- 10% cable

Road Construction:

Approximately 1.5 miles of new road would be constructed and approximately 1 mile of existing roads would be improved to meet current BMPs. A temporary bridge would be installed on an existing approach and removed upon sale completion. All new roads and roads currently closed on state lands would be physically blocked and administratively closed to motorized use upon sale completion.

Public Involvement:

- DNRC mailed scoping letters in December 2004/January 2005 to adjacent landowners, the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and known interested parties. Public involvement was also solicited through notices published in *The Mineral County Independent*, posted on public roads throughout the project area and through personal communication with adjacent landowners. Comments were received from The Ecology Center, Rex Lincoln, Jeanie Sage, and Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks.

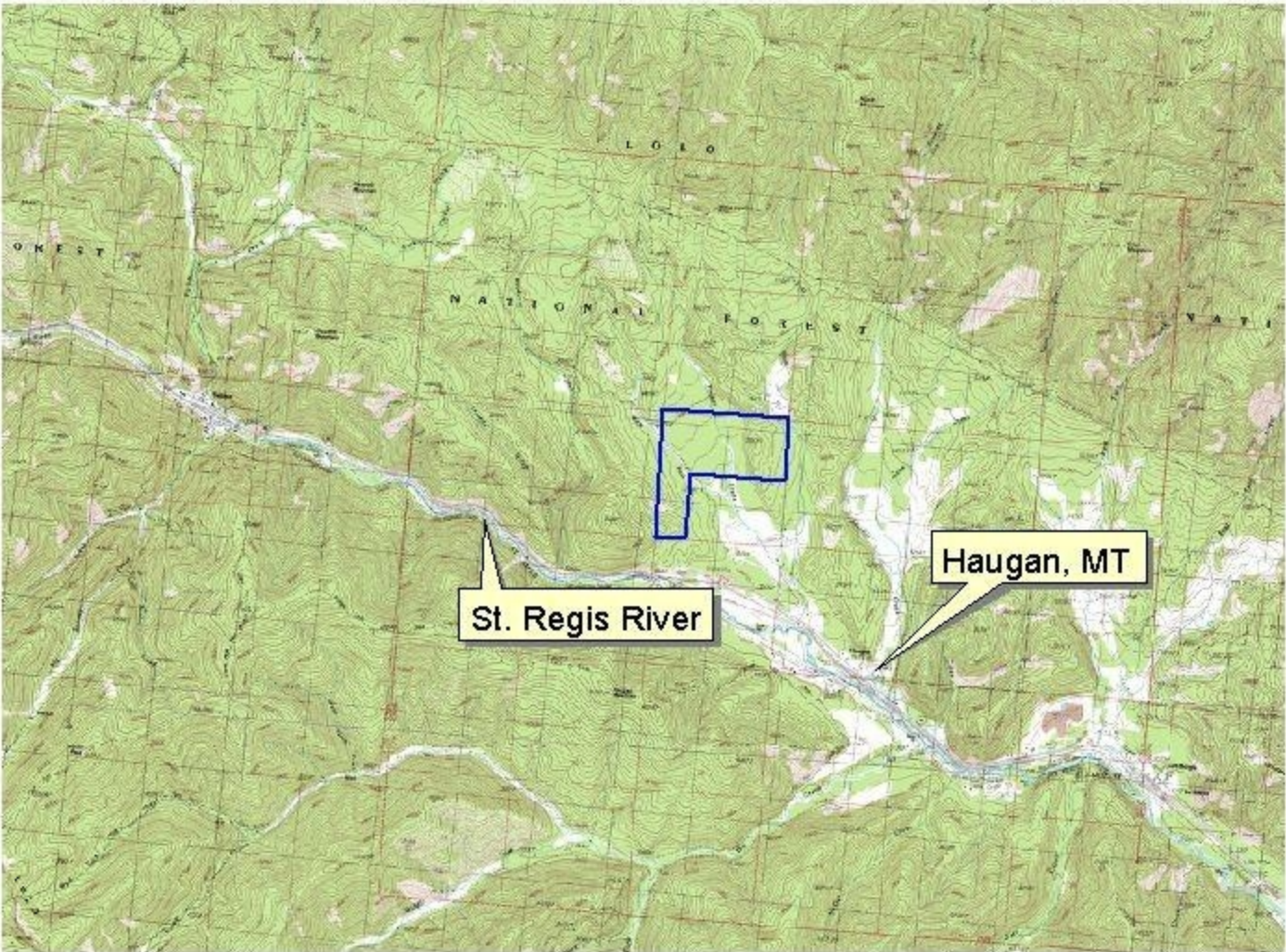
Issues and Mitigations:

- **Wildlife** – The project is designed to limit impacts to wildlife. Contract requirements include retention of snags and snag recruits concentrated along riparian corridors. Harvest would be deferred on 152 acres identified as Lynx mature foraging habitat, riparian Fisher habitat, or Goshawk nesting habitat.
- **Soils, Water Quality and Fisheries** – Timber Creek and its tributaries support native cold-water fisheries. Riparian protection measures for the project meet or exceed Montana SMZ law and Montana Administrative Rules for fish bearing streams. Restricting equipment operation to dry, frozen or snow covered soils, requiring cable skidding on slopes over 45% and skid trail planning would minimize potential soil disturbance. Road improvements associated with the project would reduce sediment delivery.
- **Noxious Weeds** – Oxe-eye daisy and spotted knapweed have been identified on the site and targeted for treatment. Contract specifications require the purchaser to clean all off-road equipment prior to delivery to the project area. Noxious weed monitoring would continue.
- **Forest Health and Fire Hazard** – Productivity and forest health in the project area are declining due to mountain pine beetle caused mortality of lodgepole pine and competition in overstocked stands. Treatment would improve forest health by reducing overall stand density and removing dead, dying and threatened lodgepole pine. While the operation of logging equipment and the production of logging slash may pose a temporary, short-term fire hazard, the removal of dead and dying lodgepole pine would reduce fuel loads and wildfire risks in the long term. .
- **Off Road Vehicle Access** – Unauthorized Off Road Vehicle (ORV) trails bypass gates and vehicle barriers in Section 16 and on adjacent private and U.S. Forest Service lands. Signage and vehicle barriers would be installed to effectively limit ORV access to closed roads.
- **Visual Quality** – Logging slash, skid trails and bare road surfaces may reduce the short-term aesthetic appeal of treated stands to the recreating public and adjacent homeowners. Removal of lodgepole pine would result in a mix of continuous openings of 1-5 acres and open stands of large mature western larch and western white pine. The majority of harvest units would retain all tree species other than lodgepole pine in an effort to reduce visual impacts of harvesting.

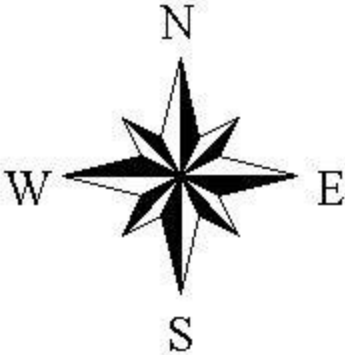
The Director recommends the Land Board direct the Department to sell the Timber Creek Timber Sale.

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Section 16 T19N R30W

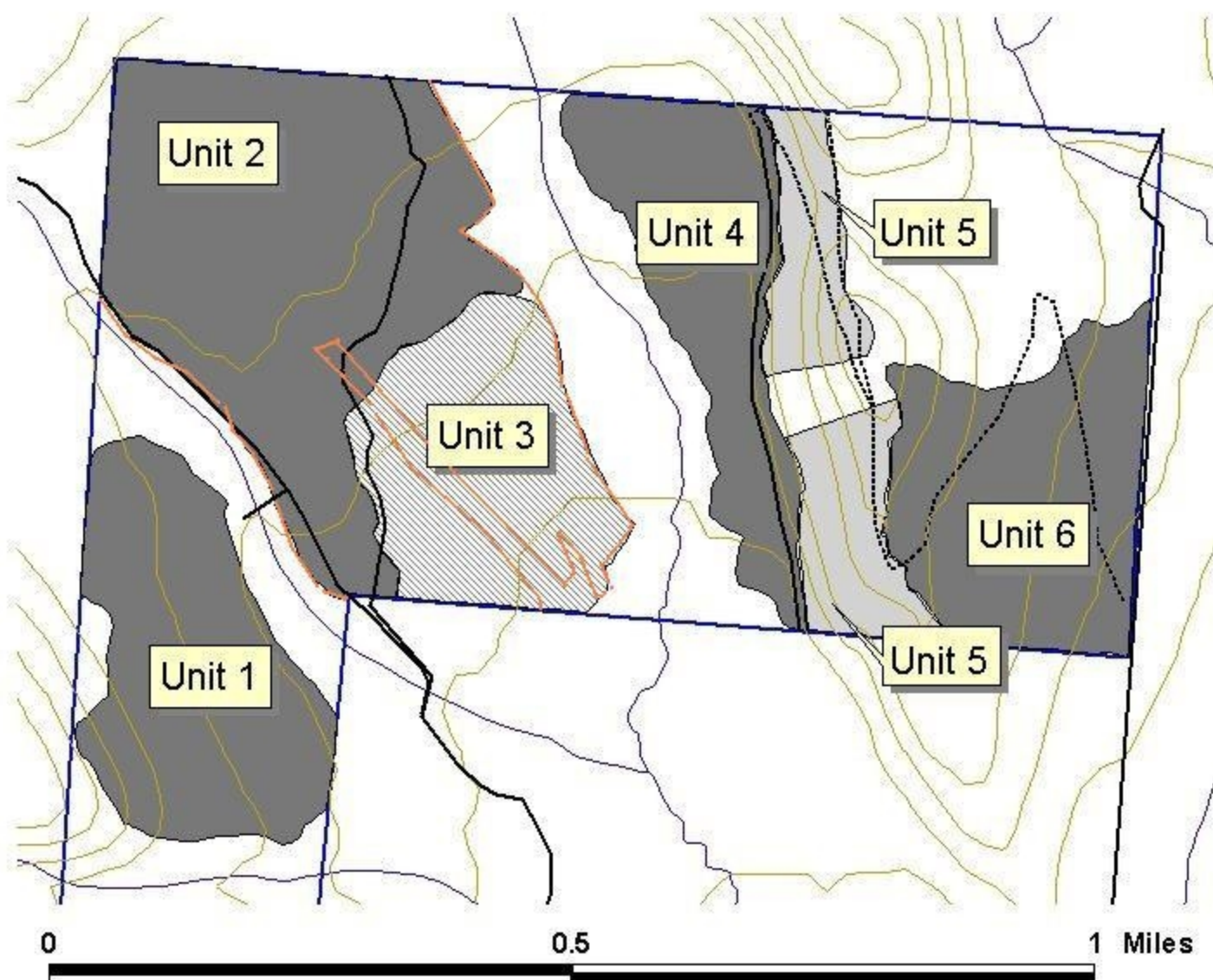


 Timber Creek Project Area



Timber Creek Timber Sale

Section 16 T19N R30W



-  Existing roads.shp
-  Proposed New Road
-  Tractor/ITS - Units 1,2,4and 6: 188 acres
-  Tractor/OR - Unit 3: 32 acres
-  Cable/CT - Unit 5: 23 acres
-  Streamside Management Zones

